(b) whether it is a fact that the demolitions undertaken, so far, were limited only to the buildings belonging to the poor and ordinary sections of the people;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there are unauthorised residential/ commercial buildings at various places in South Delhi including Sainik Farms remaining untouched; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The details of demolitions carried out by various agencies in Delhi during last one year are as under:

DDA during the year 2001-2002 carried out 460 demolition programmes and demolished 8906 unauthorised buildings/structures and reclaimed 164.84 acres of land.

MCD has taken demolition action against 972 unauthorised constructions during the calendar year 2001.

NDMC has removed about 68 number of unauthorised constructions during the year 2001-2002.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The Government is in favour of strict action against all unauthorised construction. The Ministry has issued necessary instructions, from time to time, to all local bodies including DDA to take firm action against encroachments/unauthorised constructions. However, detection of, and action against, unauthorised constructions is a continuous process and the concerned local bodies take action against the defaulters as per the relevant laws. Government has also set up a Commission of Inquiry headed by Justice G.T. Nanavati to inquire into the circumstances and the manner in which Sainik farms and other illegal constructions have come up in violation of civic and revenue law including zoning regulations, building bye-laws and planning norms and also to look into all concerned issues and recommend measures which need to be adopted to secure effective implementation of law and check coming up of such constructions in future.

Bid of Sterlite Industries for Hindustan Zinc Ltd.

*492. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to accept the bid of Sterlite Industries for its stake in Hindustan Zinc Ltd.;

(b) if so, whether this decision will tantamount to promoting monopolistic interests in non-ferrous metal industry since Sterlite had earlier bagged the BALCO disinvestment bid; and

(c) whether in the (HZL) disinvestment package, Government had stipulated a minimum Rs. 50.00 crore earnest money, precluding other prospective bidders?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has disinvested 26 per cent stake in Hindustan Zinc Ltd. in favour of Sterlite Opportunities and Ventures Ltd. (SOVL)

(b) No Sir. There are other major players in aluminium sector like NALCO and HINDALCO. In Zinc, there is Binani Zinc Industries Ltd. Both aluminium and Zinc are OGL items. In case of abuse of dominance, Government will have adequate powers to take necessary remedial measures through reduction of import duty and through other legal means available with it, to ensure competition and protect the interests of consumers.

(c) While receiving the financial bids, the Government stipulated submission of an irrevocable bank guarantee for an amount of Rs. 50 crore to secure the performance of its obligations upon the selection of the successful bidder and to secure the compliance with the provisions of the Takeover Code of SEBI by the Strategic Partner. Such bank guarantees are taken in all cases of disinvestment, and they are uniformly applicable to all bidders.

Blind People in the country

*493. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are about 12 million blind people in the country who constitute 25 per cent of the World's population;

(b) if so, whether the report, based on data collected from schools and colleges in over 40 cities across the country has pointed out that majority of eye disorders found in the country were due to refractive error and cataract, which are correctible;

(c) the other main reasons for the same;